

Selma Sierra
Utah BLM State Director
Bureau of Land Management
PO Box 45155
Salt Lake City
Utah 94145-0155

Dear BLM State Land Director Sierra,

I am writing to protest the offering for lease for oil and gas development of Parcel UT0507-005. How can the BLM offer this parcel for oil and gas lease, with the internationally famous earthwork "Sun Tunnels" in it's midst?

Any development in the vast, flat, open space in this area would be seen for miles and would impact a visitor's enjoyment of "Sun Tunnels". The tunnels are aligned with the extreme positions of the the rising and setting of the sun on the horizon, which occurs on the summer and winter solstices. The tunnels are glowingly golden on the inside as the sun rise or sets through the tunnels.

"Sun Tunnels," created by American artist Nancy Holt, brings visitors interested in art to a natural, desert environment that they would not be likely to explore otherwise. People love spending time in the wilderness of the desert, appreciating and understanding the cyclical time of the universe as the earth rotates and the sun appears to rise and set. For this sense of awe of the universe to continue to inspire, an unimpeded view to the horizon is absolutely necessary.

"Sun Tunnels" has brought thousands of visitors to Utah, many of them from abroad. The artwork/observatory has entered the history of art and is included in art history books worldwide. Over its 31 years of existence "Sun Tunnels" has been written about extensively, articles appearing in numerous books, newspapers and magazines. After being shown on the covers of quite a few of these books, "Sun Tunnels" is again currently on the cover of two books published this year, one French and the other, "Destination Art", published by Thames and Hudson in London.

As an art history professor and curator, I have had the opportunity to escort international visitors to "Sun Tunnels" at least several times each year. Very little of the art produced in Utah registers with national/international art enthusiasts, with the exception of "Sun Tunnels" and "Spiral Jetty" (created by Nancy Holt's husband, Robert Smithson). By allowing oil and gas development in this stark and beautiful landscape, Utah diminishes a state treasure that should be preserved.

Withdrawing Parcel UT0507-005 for lease for oil and gas development will preserve a very significant work of American art, appreciated internationally, and leave the surrounding desert a beautiful wilderness. Please consider this request seriously!

Sincerely,
Hikmet Loe
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Hikmet

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